

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 RSR-01 ADP-00 ACDA-19 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 MOSCOW 6781

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, UR

SUBJ: US- SOVIET RELATIONS AFTER THE SUMMIT: LONG- TERM FACTORS
OF COOPERATION AND INSTABILITY

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REF: MOSCOW 6153 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: IN THE FIRST PART OF THIS ASSESSMENT (REFTTEL), WE CONCLUDED THAT BREZHNEV WILL WISH TO DEMONSTRATE BY THE RESULTS OF HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON THAT US- SOVIET RELATIONS HAVE BEEN PLACED ON A MORE STABLE, MUTUALLY- PROFITABLE AND LONG- TERM BASIS. IN THE TWO REMAINING PARTS OF THE ASSESSMENT, WE ATTEMPT TO SINGLE OUT ELEMENTS OPERATING ON THE SOVIET SIDE OF THE EQUATION WHICH TEND TO REINFORCE US- SOVIET COOPERATION ON THE ONE HAND AND FORCES OR DEVELOPMENTS WHICH RISK DERAILING BREZHNEV' S WESTPOLITIK ON THE OTHER.

2. WE FIND THAT BREZHNEV' S POLICY STILL FACES OPPOSITION WITHIN PARTY CIRCLES, WHERE IT MAY BE MORE ACCEPTABLE AS A NEP- TYPE TACTICAL COMPROMISE THAN THE BASIS FOR A GENUINE ACCOMMODATION WITH " IMPERIALISM." WHATEVER THE DOUBTS AND EXPECTATIONS IN BOTH MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON, HOWEVER, THE POLICY HAS A CERTAIN BUILT- IN VITALITY AND MOMENTUM OF ITS OWN. INTERACTION ON A SERIES OF LEVELS-- POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL, SCIENTIFIC, TECHNOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL-- INTERJECTS A MORE PRODUCTIVE AND POSITIVE CONTENT INTO A RELATIONSHIP WHICH WAS FOR TOO LONG DOMINATED BY FEARS AND CONCERNS GENERATED BY THE COLD WAR.

3. A REVIEW OF SOVIET RELATIONS WITH CHINA, JAPAN, SE ASIA, THE MIDDLE EAST AND EUROPE SUGGESTS THAT FACTORS ENCOURAGING SOME MEASURE OF COOPERATION WITH THE US OUTWEIGH THE ELEMENTS OF FRICTION INHERENT IN THE PURSUIT OF OUR RESPECTIVE NATIONAL INTERESTS. THERE IS CERTAINLY NOTHING AUTOMATIC OR INEVITABLE, HOWEVER, ABOUT THE PRESENT TREND TOWARD AN IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS. THERE ARE IDENTIFIABLE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS, AND PARTICULARLY TRENDS WITHIN THE USSR ITSELF, WHICH COULD LIMIT IF NOT SERIOUSLY SET BACK OUR RELATIONS. THESE DESTABILIZING FACTORS AND CERTAIN BROAD POLICY CONCLUSIONS ARE DISCUSSED IN THE FINAL MESSAGE. END SUMMARY.

4. LASTING DETENTE OR BREATHING SPELL? THE APPARENT EFFORT BEING MADE BY SOVIET PROPAGANDISTS TO DEVELOP SUPPORT FOR BREZHNEV' S POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC OPENING TO THE WEST SUGGESTS THAT DOCTRINAIRE ELEMENTS NEED TO BE CONVINCED THAT THE BENEFITS OF THE POLICY OVERRIDE THE RISKS AND DANGERS. THESE
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ELEMENTS STILL CONSIDER IT NECESSARY TO RESIST " COMPROMISE WITH IMPERIALISM;" THEY ARE DETERMINED TO CHANGE THE " CORRELATION OF FORCES BETWEEN THE TWO CAMPS" TO MOSCOW' S ADVANTAGE, ARE PREOCCUPIED WITH INTERNAL PURITY AND THE " IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE" AND ARE NOSTALGIC FOR AUTARKY.

A. BECAUSE BREZHNEV MUST PROTECT HIS POLITICAL FLANKS AGAINST THE DOCTRINAIRE " LEFT", WHICH NEEDS TO BE REASSURED

THAT HIS " PEACE PROGRAM" IS A " LENINIST OFFENSIVE STRATEGY" AND NOT A SELL- OUT TO IMPERIALISM, IT IS MORE DIFFICULT THAN USUAL TO SEPARATE PROPAGANDA FROM LEADERSHIP INTENTIONS. WHEN BREZHNEV SPEAKS OF CHANGING THE CHARACTER OF EAST- WEST RELATIONS AND PRAVDA (APRIL 29 LEADER ON APRIL PLENUM) DEFINES THE PRESENT POLICY AS A " STRATEGIC LENINIST COURSE," THEY APPARENTLY HAVE IN MIND A LONG- TERM EFFORT TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE WEST. IZVESTIYA' S APRIL 19 LEADER, ON THE OTHER HAND, ENCOURAGES THE FAITHFUL TO BELIEVE THAT A NEP- TYPE TACTICAL RETREAT IS ALL THAT IS INVOLVED IN CURRENT POLICY INNOVATIONS; " POLITICAL TACTICS OF LENIN. . . INCLUDE NOT ONLY THE ABILITY TO WAGE OFFENSIVE WARFARE, BUT ALSO THE ABILITY WHEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES DICTATE, TO ACCEPT COMPROMISE, TO RETREAT IN ORDER TO GATHER FORCES AND ATTACK MORE SUCCESSFULLY."

B. BUT WHATEVER BREZHNEV' S INTENTIONS MAY BE IN 1985 (AND WE DOUBT HE CAN PLAN THAT FAR AHEAD), WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS THAT TODAY LEADING SOVIET IDEOLOGISTS LIKE USA INSTITUTE DIRECTOR ARBATOV (WRITING IN KOMMUNIST NO. 3) EVIDENTLY HAVE INSTRUCTIONS TO TRY AND PERSUADE THE FAITHFUL THAT A LASTING IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS WITH AN IMPERIALIST STATE IS A REALISTIC POSSIBILITY. HE ARGUES THAT THERE ARE " SPHERES OF COMMON INTEREST" WITH THE US AND THAT CHANGES IN ATTITUDES WITHIN THE US MEAN THAT THE PRESENT IMPROVEMENT IN SOVIET- US RELATIONS CAN BE " LASTING AND VIABLE" AND NOT MERELY AN " EPISODE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION." HIS ANALYSIS OF THE COMPETITION BETWEEN OUR TWO SYSTEMS IS ALMOST A MIRROR IMAGE OF SIMILAR HOPEFUL BUT SOBER ANALYSES IN THE WEST OF US- SOVIET RELATIONS.

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5. FORCES OF ACCOMMODATION AND COOPERATION. WE WOULD AGREE WITH ARBATOV THAT WHAT WILL HAPPEN BETWEEN US WILL NOT DEPEND SO MUCH ON WHAT EACH SIDE SAYS OR EVEN EXPECTS OF THE OTHER, BUT RATHER ON THE EXISTENCE OF " OBJECTIVE" FACTORS WHICH HELP TO WEAVE OR TO TEAR WHAT THE PRESIDENT HAS REFERRED TO AS THE
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" FABRIC OF AN EMERGING RELATIONSHIP." IN THIS MESSAGE WE ARE CONCERNED TO IDENTIFY THE AREAS OF COMMON AND DEVELOPING BILATERAL INTEREST, AND THE INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES WHICH MAY ENCOURAGE THE USSR TO SEEK TO PRESERVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE U. S.

A. BILATERALLY, ONE OF THE MOST COMPELLING ARGUMENTS FOR ACCOMMODATION IS THE STAGGERING COST OF MODERN ARMAMENTS AND THE RISK OF MUTUAL ANNIHILATION. EVEN IF SALT AND MBFR EVENTUALLY REDUCE THE BURDEN OF THE ARMS RACE FOR BOTH SIDES, CONFRONTATION AND MISCALCULATION CAN STILL BE FATAL.

B. THERE WILL INEVITABLY BE SOME DISILLUSIONMENT AS THE TWO SIDES PROBE THE LIMITS OF MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS COOPERATION ON THE WIDE RANGE OF SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL, SPACE, ENVIRONMENTAL AND OTHER AGREEMENTS IN VARYING PHASES OF IMPLEMENTATION. THE MOMENTUM BEHIND THESE PROGRAMS, THE STRONG INTEREST PARTICULARLY OF THE SOVIET INTELLIGENTSIA IN DEVELOPING LINKS WITH THE WEST AND COMPETITION AMONG WESTERN ORGANIZATIONS FOR CONTACTS IN THE USSR SHOULD STILL SERVE TO PROMOTE, HOWEVER, SELF- REINFORCING HABITS OF COOPERATION.

C. THE EXTENT OF ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE WILL DEPEND, OF

COURSE, ON HOW SUCCESSFUL SUCH LONG- TIME VENTURES AS OCCIDENTAL' S AGREEMENT ON AMMONIA PRODUCTION AND DELIVERIES PROVE TO BE, AND WHETHER ANY OF THE OTHER " GREAT PROJECTS" (SUCH AS LNG) ARE ACTUALLY REALIZED. BUT EVEN IF THEY ARE NOT, THE TREND IS TOWARD INSTITUTIONALIZING AND EXTENDING PRESENT ECONOMIC TIES. WESTERN FEARS THAT THE USSR WILL USE THE IMPORTATION OF FOREIGN TECHNOLOGY AND GREATER INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICIENCY TO " CATCH UP" WITH THE US AND THEN RELAPSE INTO OLD AUTARKIC PRACTICES SEEM ILL- FOUNDED. WE BELIEVE THAT THE USSR WILL CONTINUE TO LAG BEHIND THE WEST FOR MANY YEARS IN THE INTRO- DUCION OF NEW TECHNOLOGY, IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION- - PARTICULARLY FEED GRAINS FOR CATTLE-- AND IN QUALITY WORKMAN- SHIP. THIS CONTINUED TECHNOLOGICAL GAP WILL PERSUADE SOVIET LEADERS THAT THEY MUST CONTINUE TO IMPORT NEEDED TECHNOLOGY AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS AND TO USE WESTERN SKILLS AND CREDITS TO DEVELOP THEIR NATURAL RESOURCES AND TO SATISFY THE NEEDS OF AN EXPANDING CONSUMER MARKET. THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IN MOSCOW WILL SLOWLY EXPAND AS TRADE DEVELOPS (MORE SLOWLY, TO BE SURE, THAN MOST BUSINESSMEN PROBABLY ANTICIPATE) AND TOURISM WILL CONTINUE TO BRING IN BADLY- NEEDED FOREIGN EXCHANGE. WHILE DOING BUSINESS WITH MOSCOW WILL REMAIN DIFFICULT, FRICTION BE-
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TWEEN US AND USSR ON ECONOMIC LEVEL SHOULD BE LESS THAN THAT WITH OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES; US FIRMS WILL ALSO PROBABLY CON- TINUE TO ENJOY THEIR PRESENT COMPETITIVE EDGE OVER WEST EUROPEAN AND JAPANESE RIVALS, REFLECTING LARGELY SOVIET POLITICAL PREF- ERENCE FOR DEALING WITH THE OTHER GREAT POWER.

D. THE USSR IS DESTINED BY ITS OWN INTERESTS AND ITS INFERIORITY COMPLEX TO SEEK TO PLAY THE ROLE OF A GREAT POWER, RELUCTANTLY SHOULDERING SOME OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES WHICH THAT ROLE IMPLIES. SOVIETS ARE OBVIOUSLY FLATTERED THAT THE OTHER SUPER POWER IS NOW PREPARED TO ENGAGE IN REGULAR CONSULTATION ON MANY ISSUES. IT WOULD APPEAR TO BE IN THE INTEREST OF BOTH SIDES THAT THIS HABIT BE DISCREETLY CONTINUED, BEARING IN MIND THE SUSPICIONS OF OTHER POWERS OF SUPER POWER COLLUSION.

E. THE CUMBERSOME SOVIET BUREAUCRATIC MACHINE IS PAIN- FULLY CHANGING DIRECTION UNDER GOADING FROM ABOVE. IT IS BEGIN- NING TO FACTOR CLOSER US- SOVIET RELATIONS INTO ITS LONG- TERM PLANS AND IS ACQUIRING A BUREAUCRATIC STAKE IN IMPLEMENTING POLICIES OF INTERDEPENDENCE.

F. THERE IS A GROWING SOPHISTICATION ON BOTH SIDES CON- CERNING THE MORE INTRACTABLE SENSITIVE DOMESTIC ISSUES WHICH ARE NOT YET READY FOR SOLUTION, E. G., TRAVEL CONTROLS, EMIGRATION RESTRICTIONS, THE RIGHTS OF CORRESPONDENTS, BALTIC STATE RECOG- NITION, RADIO LIBERTY.

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6. INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FAR EAST, SOUTHEAST ASIA,
MIDDLE EAST AND EASTERN EUROPE ALSO APPEAR TO ENCOURAGE THE
USSR IN THE DIRECTION OF DIALOGUE RATHER THAN CONFRONTATION WITH
THE US.

A. CHINA. CONCERN TO PREVENT THE US OR JAPAN FROM TAKING

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SIDES WITH CHINA WILL CONTINUE TO PUSH USSR TOWARD ACCOMMODATION WITH BOTH WASHINGTON AND TOKYO. TO INCREASE THEIR RESPECTIVE BARGAINING POWER WITH THE US AND JAPAN, ONE MIGHT EXPECT THAT THE USSR AND CHINA WOULD MAKE SOME EFFORT TO EASE THEIR CONFRONTATION. THERE IS LITTLE EVIDENCE THAT THIS LOGIC WILL PREVAIL IN THE SHORT TERM. NATIONAL AND IDEOLOGICAL INTERESTS WILL CLASH FOR SOME TIME TO COME. AT ONE TIME THERE WAS FEAR THAT SOVIET EFFORTS TO COMPETE IN MILITANCE IN THE THIRD WORLD WITH CHINA WOULD BRING IT INTO CONFLICT WITH THE US. LIKE THE USSR, HOWEVER, CHINA IS CHOOSING GOOD RELATIONS WITH GOVERNMENTS IN POWER OVER SUPPORT FOR THE OPPOSITION, AND BOTH COUNTRIES ARE TRANSFERRING THE WEIGHT OF COMPETITION TO THE MORE LEGITIMATE AREAS OF DIPLOMACY AND FOREIGN AID-- WITH THE US OFTEN THE LESSER RIVAL OF EACH.

B. SOUTHEAST ASIA. THE PARIS AGREEMENT REMOVED DIRECT US INVOLVEMENT IN VIETNAM AS A THORN IN US- SOVIET RELATIONS. THERE REMAINS, HOWEVER, AN INHERENT CONTRADICTION BETWEEN MOSCOW'S GENUINE DESIRES TO STABILIZE INDOCHINA AS A BARRIER AGAINST SOUTHWARD CHINESE EXPANSION AND ITS CONCERN TO MAINTAIN ITS INFLUENCE WITH HANOI. IF UNFOLDING EVENTS FAVOR THE DRV/ PRG, MOSCOW CAN BE EXPECTED TO ACCEPT HANOI- STYLE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT, AT THE RISK OF IRRITATING WASHINGTON. BUT CONTINUED DEMONSTRATION OF RVN VIABILITY IS LIKELY TO PERSUADE MOSCOW EVENTUALLY TO ACCEPT A DIVIDED VIETNAM, AS IT HAS A DIVIDED KOREA, UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THESE COUNTRIES MAY FIND MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE PROCEDURES FOR UNIFICATION. MOSCOW'S PROPOSAL FOR ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY IS LIKELY TO BE CONSIDERED SERIOUSLY BY THE US AND JAPAN ONLY IF IT TREATS DIVIDED STATES AS EQUALLY SOVEREIGN.

C. MIDDLE EAST. WITH THE REMOVAL OF SOVIET MILITARY FORCES FROM EGYPT LAST JULY, THE DANGER OF DIRECT MILITARY CONFRONTATION WITH THE US DIMINISHED-- AND MOSCOW WILL WISH TO KEEP IT THAT WAY. IT ACCORDINGLY APPEARS DETERMINED TO CONTINUE RESISTING DEMANDS FOR SUPPORT OF ARAB OFFENSIVE ACTION. IT APPARENTLY HOPES TO KEEP UP PRESSURE ON THE US AND ISRAEL, AND TO MAINTAIN THE CREDIBILITY OF ITS PRO- ARAB POSTURE BY SUPPLYING DEFENSIVE MILITARY ARMS AND POLITICAL BACKING FOR ARAB DIPLOMATIC ACTION. UNLESS THERE IS A BREAKTHROUGH ON THE NEGOTIATING FRONT, WITH THE US AND USSR EXERTING SOME USEFUL PRESSURE BEHIND THE SCENES AN THEIR CLIENTS, THE OUTLOOK FOR THE INDEFINITE FUTURE REMAINS ONE OF LOW- LEVEL CON-
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FRONTATION BY PROXY, WITHOUT ANY SERIOUS ADVERSE REPERCUSSIONS ON US- SOVIET RELATIONS.

D. WESTERN EUROPE. BREZHNEV HAS EVERY REASON TO CONTINUE HIS PRESENT DETENTE POLICY TOWARD EUROPE, WHICH HAS SEEN A BREAKTHROUGH IN RELATIONS WITH FRANCE AND THE FRG AND STEADY PROGRESS TOWARD CONVENING HIS COVETED CSCE. HE PREFERS TO PLAY DOWN POINTS OF DIFFERENCE WITH THE US OVER EUROPEAN POLICY AND TO SOLICIT US HELP BOTH IN PROMOTING EAST- WEST COOPERATION

AND IN PREVENTING THE COMMON MARKET FROM DAMAGING THE INTERESTS OF NON- MEMBER STATES-- AN AREA OF POTENTIAL MUTUAL CONCERN. HE IS NOT ABOVE EXPLOITING EUROPEAN FEARS OF A US- SOVIET DEAL ON CSCE OR MBFR, BUT HE PROBABLY UNDERSTANDS THAT ANY MORE BLATANT EFFORT TO PLAY THE US OFF AGAINST ITS ALLIES RISKS REVIVING LATENT WESTERN FEARS OF SOVIET HEGEMONISTIC, DIVISIVE DESIGNS ON EUROPE. MOSCOW' S COY APPROACH TO MBFR IN A SENSE EPITOMIZES ITS AMBIGUOUS ATTITUDE TOWARD THE US PRESENCE IN EUROPE; IT SEES THAT PRESENCE AS A DETERRENT TO FORMATION OF A WEST EUROPEAN NUCLEAR FORCE, BUT OTHERWISE OBSTRUCTIVE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PURELY SOVIET- EUROPEAN DIALOGUE. BREZHNEV HAS BEEN COMPELLED BY THE US TO RECOGNIZE THAT HE CANNOT PROCEED FURTHER DOWN THE ROAD TOWARD HIS GOALS OF A CSCE AND EUROPEAN DETENTE WITHOUT AGREEING TO DISCUSS THE MILITARY CONFRONTATION IN CENTRAL EUROPE. HERE AGAIN, MOSCOW FINDS ITSELF ENGAGED WITH THE US IN NEGOTIATIONS WHICH WILL TEND TO DEVELOP THEIR OWN MOMENTUM, AND FROM WHICH WITHDRAWAL WILL BE DIFFICULT.

7. IN SUM, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THERE ARE GROUNDS FOR OPTIMISM AND THAT " OBJECTIVE FACTORS" ARE IN TRAIN WHICH ENCOURAGE ACCOMMODATION AND PRODUCTIVE HABITS OF CONSULTATION AND COOPERATION BETWEEN THE US AND THE USSR. THERE IS NOTHING AUTOMATIC ABOUT THIS PROCESS, HOWEVER, AND THERE ARE A NUMBER OF POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS WHICH COULD TAKE PLACE WHICH WOULD SERIOUSLY SET BACK OUR RELATIONS. THESE WILL BE THE SUBJECT OF A SEPARATE MESSAGE.
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